

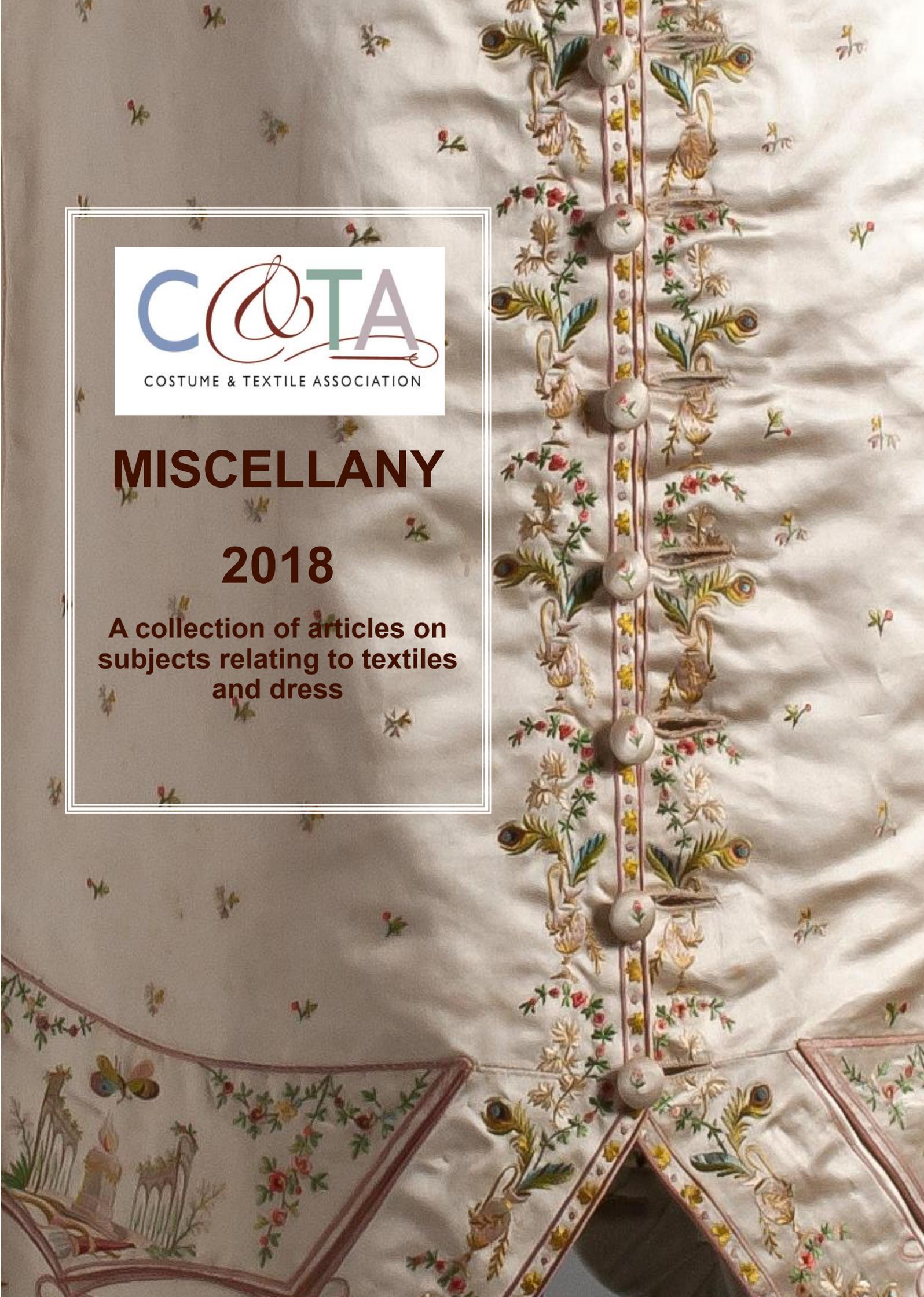


COSTUME & TEXTILE ASSOCIATION

# MISCELLANY

## 2018

A collection of articles on  
subjects relating to textiles  
and dress



## Chair's Letter from Joy Evitt

This edition of *Miscellany* has a variety of articles based around Dr Michael Nix's research and other aspects of the eighteenth century. Michael Nix and Aviva Leigh received the inaugural **Geoffrey Squire Bursary** in 2017 and we look forward to their report on 13<sup>th</sup> October at Norwich Castle. There have been some very exciting discoveries, as you will see in his article.

Since my last letter in *Noticeboard*, we have had a variety of events. One that was particularly successful was the **Costume Detective Day**, which had to be rescheduled from February because of extreme weather and took place in April. Jenny Daniels and Isobel Auker's excellent preparation ensured that we all had a very interesting time and learnt a great deal about clothing in the 1920s. The Costessey Centre venue is great and the facilities were perfect for the day; there is plenty of parking and the Centre it is on a direct bus route from the centre of Norwich.

Also in April, some of us had a wonderful weekend in Burnley, organised by Barbara Coe. Both the visit to **Gawthorpe Hall**, with all its beautiful textiles, and to **Helmshore Mill**, with remarkable machinery that still works – thanks to multi-tasking staff - made the two days a real pleasure.

The C&TA were involved in the first ever **Norfolk Day** held on 27 July this year. We put on a display of **Norwich Shawls** in the Forum Library in Norwich. It is still surprising that some people are not aware of Norwich's rich textile history.

Pippa Lacey organised the filming of **Helen Hoyte**, with her shawls, by professional film makers in July. It is hoped that something special will provide a legacy for all the work Helen has done, following on from her friend and our co-founder, Pamela Claburn. Watch this space!

**Heritage Open Days** at The City Bookshop and the Sheringham Museum proved to be very successful. We had hundreds of visitors. We were a little short of volunteers to help with the stewarding of the exhibitions as HoDs now run over two weeks in September, rather than just one. We hope that more members will feel able to come along and help in the future. It is great fun and does not require a great deal of knowledge, just an enthusiasm for costume and textiles. And there will always be a Committee member to help.

On 10<sup>th</sup> November, we will be at Norwich Castle, helping with **The Suffragette Day**. Come and join us making Suffragette badges and listen to a talk on **What Women did in World War I**.

We now have our 2019 programme in place. Our Events sub-committee have planned to include a variety of events to help commemorate our **30<sup>th</sup> Pearl Anniversary**. There are a few old favourites, as well as some new ideas, including a special **Tea Party at Strangers' Hall**.

Running a charity, even one as small as ours, is becoming more expensive because of new regulations, such as GDPR; therefore the Committee, after a long discussion, has decided to raise some of the membership fees. For example, a single membership will go up from £18 to £20 per year. With the many benefits of membership - such as reduced rates at events, free entry to all the Norwich Museums, as well as 10% off in the shops and cafés - we hope you will feel that this is acceptable. We are also in the process of updating our C&TA website.

I must thank Pauline White for organising this edition, all those who have contributed articles, Pippa Lacey for proof reading and Maggie Johnson for her skills with the presentation, without whom our autumn journal would not be possible.

I am always grateful for the support of the committee and to our members, who do so much to ensure the smooth running of our charity, in these more complicated times.

Enjoy *Miscellany*

*Helen Hoyte, Vice President of the C&TA in conversation with Clive Dunn of Eye Film (right).*

*Front cover: Detail of a man's satin wedding waistcoat with embroidery, Norfolk Museum Service*

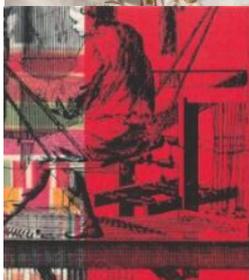
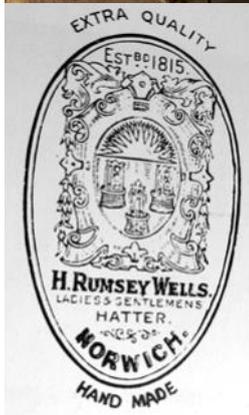




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## Helen Hoyte Norwich Shawls Film Archive

In celebration of our Vice President, Helen Hoyte's 95th birthday, the C&TA commissioned a short film of Helen sharing her knowledge of the Norwich shawl and textile industries. On two of the hottest days this summer, Helen remained extremely cool and gracious while talking about her fascinating life, her career and her passions. Helen is a founder supporter of the Association, as well as author of books on the Norwich shawls and the Norwich Strangers.

The C&TA were delighted to partner with award-winning Eye Film, a Norwich-based video production company, who produced the BBC One documentary, *Fishermen to Kings: The Forgotten Photographs of Olive Edis*, the Norfolk Society and WWI photographer.

It is hoped that the Helen Hoyte Film Archive will be an invaluable archive resource for the C&TA, enriching the legacy of three friends and founders of the C&TA: Pamela Clabburn, Geoffrey Squire and Helen Hoyte, MBE. The film will enable us to share Helen's knowledge of the history of Norwich shawls and textiles with our members and with wider audiences. The Geoffrey Squire legacy funds were allocated to Helen's film archive project as fitting tribute to three key members of the C&TA.

Clips of Helen's film will be uploaded onto the new website, currently under construction. We look forward to sharing these and other excerpts of Helen's film with members in the near future.

## Weaving the past to life

*Aviva Leigh, Norfolk-based weaver, dyer and teacher, has been recreating several of the brightly coloured eighteenth-century 'Norwich Stuffs', using her 2017 Geoffrey Squires Bursary award.*

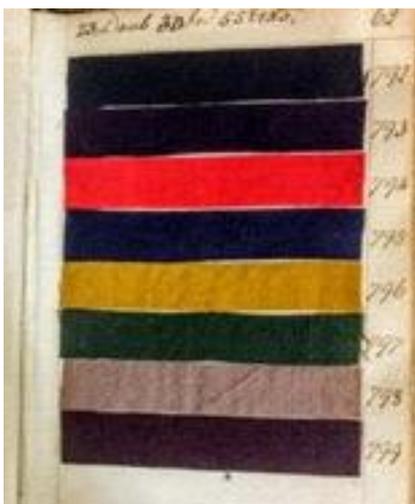
Ten years ago, I arrived in Norwich as a 'stranger', to begin my textiles degree at Norwich University of the Arts (NUA). The first few weeks were spent exploring the City's rich textile heritage, following a trail I found on the erstwhile Norwich Textiles website. I specialized in weaving and dyeing and visited the Norwich Castle Textile Study Centre (now at the Shirehall) as part of my research for various projects. It was here that I fell in love with the Norwich pattern books, filled with colourful eighteenth-century woven samples.

Over the years, my practice has developed. Recently, I have been working on reproducing some of the historic colours in a set of woven samples. Working together with Dr Michael Nix for our Geoffrey Squire Bursary project, I have enjoyed finding out more about the textile trade of our 'Fine City' during the eighteenth century, considered to be the 'Golden Age' of Norwich Textiles.

'Norwich Stuffs' is the term sometimes given to worsted cloths produced in Norwich between the 17th and 18th century. Many of the cloths had been made in the City since earlier times, however it was the skills of the incoming 'Strangers' who brought refinement and finesse to the cloth designs we see today.

The Norwich pattern books hold a huge selection of woven designs, all with their own distinctive names and characteristic elements. Although I marvel at the technical ability of the weavers to produce some of the more complicated designs, such as *Tabourets* and Brocaded *Callimancoes*, my favourites are the simpler weave structures, where the emphasis is on the dyer's skill in creating a range of vivid colours. These are the designs I was inspired by for my project.

**Camlet:** a simple plain weave produced on four shafts. The fineness of the threads and the number of ends per inch, mean it was not possible to weave this cloth on two shafts. Single camlets has a twisted (2 ply) warp and a single weft and double camlets has a twisted 2 ply thread in both warp and weft. Some of the cloths were created with pre-dyed threads but others were woven 'in the grey' and 'piece dyed' afterwards. A piece was usually 20 inches x 30 yards with a sett of about 36 - 40 ends per inch.



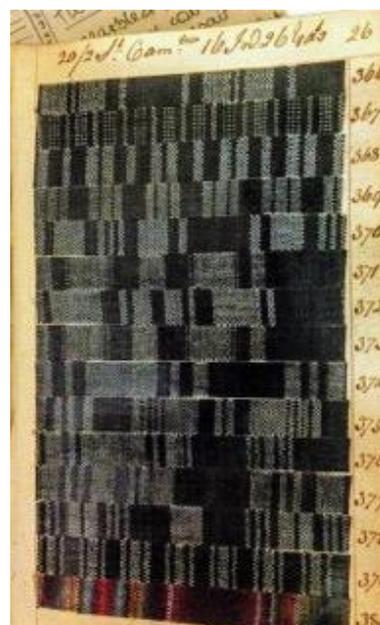
*Camlet samples showing the skill of the 18<sup>th</sup> century dyer - a typical page from the J Tuthill & Fils, Norwich pattern book 1922/135 c 1790 © Norfolk Museum Services.*

**Callimancoes:** came in a variety of designs, with the stripe in the warp, usually woven in a broken twill or irregular satin (warp-faced) weave. The simplest designs were a repeat stripe across the width of the cloth, with more complex designs incorporating different width stripes and elements of 'ikat' or painted warp effects. Sometimes there would be a horizontal weft stripe running periodically across the warp to create a check. 'Clouded' *Callimancoes* featured an *ombre* effect in the warp stripes, created by graduated shades of the same colour fading in and out of the stripe. The width of the cloth was usually around 18 inches with a sett of around 40 - 50 ends per inch.



*Clouded and Ikat effects in Callimanco stripes 1947.32 1769 pattern book © Norfolk Museum Services.*

**Camlettee:** These were more 'utilitarian' plain weave cloths, with a sett of about 36 ends per inch and many were in indigo or madder dyed stripes. The width of the cloth was about 20 inches.



*Camlettee samples from the J Tuthill & Fils pattern book, a variety of (mostly) indigo blue yarn dyed stripes in plain weave, Norwich pattern book 1922/135 c 1790 © Norfolk Museum Services.*

In the eighteenth century, Norwich started trading directly with Northern Europe and Russia, where the striped *Callimancoes* were popular with Tartars and other Siberian tribes for their sashes. *Camlets*, traded by the East India Company, were also popular for winter wear in China.

At this time, Norwich's main industry was cloth, with the City paying the second highest amount of taxes, after London. The cloth trade provided work for many, with numerous different roles required - from sheep farmers, shearers, spinners, dyers, twistors, weavers, dyers etc. Weavers often worked from home, with the whole family helping to prepare materials, dress the loom and weave the cloth. Their looms were often in the top room of the house, and many 'weavers' windows' can still be seen if you look up at some of the buildings in and around Bridewell Alley.

Dyers were also an important part of the success of Norwich textiles, able to produce an incredible range of colours. Many specialized in particular colours, for example, the scarlet dyers worked with madder and cochineal, to produce vibrant red shades. Before the invention of chemical dyes in the middle of the nineteenth century, all colours were derived from natural sources; it took years to master the art of working with the different dyes - from around the world - to create the astonishing range of shades we see in the samples. There are very few records in existence today detailing how these colours were created. This inspired me to document my processes and recipes and share my knowledge through workshops.

Both Norwich weavers and dyers learnt their trade over many years, working through an apprenticeship, to a journeyman, who hopefully would one day, become a master of their trade. As I continue my own personal learning journey as a dyer and weaver, I am inspired by the City's amazing textiles and the unknown or little-known people who created them. It is testament to their skills that we can enjoy the vibrant colours, kept so carefully in the pages of the surviving Norwich pattern books.

*Callimancoe, Camlet and Camblettee pages from eighteenth-century pattern books held at the Norwich Castle Textile Study Centre. Images courtesy of Norfolk Museum Services.*

## The 'secret' colours of Norwich stuffs: the 'industrial patent' of Norwich dyers in the late eighteenth century revealed through science

*Dr Jocelyn Alcántara-García, Conservation Scientist and Assistant Professor in the Department of Art Conservation, University of Delaware, USA, has been analyzing samples in Norwich worsted pattern books in order to uncover some of the Norwich master dyers 'secret' and/or patented recipes from the eighteenth century. Her research is revealing that surprisingly limited natural dyeing materials and mordants were used to create the brilliant colours of eighteenth century Norwich stuffs. This knowledge is helping us understand how we can best conserve surviving Norwich textiles and costumes for future generations to enjoy.*

The *Oxford Dictionary* mentions that in a 'patent', an authority confers "a right or title for a set period, especially the sole right to exclude others from making, using, or selling an invention." Some scholars describe our current and detailed lack of information of Norwich master dyeing practices as 'secrecy'. Others simply attribute the scant information to the early existence of 'industrial patents'. The definitive reason for the very limited historic records of dyeing practices may remain unknown, yet such information will always be vital for collections-based knowledge and assessment. In an effort to contribute to the care and understanding of these beautiful textiles, we go to the source of all dyeing knowledge - the textiles themselves. Using a combination of instrumental analysis techniques, we are beginning to unveil some of the secrets/patents of master dyers, all of which clearly evidencing an organized, consistent and high-quality industry.



**Figure 1** J Tuthill & Son(s) Norwich worsted pattern book (c. 1790–93), accession number 65x695.3. (Left) Page 1, (centre) Page 27, (right) Page 32. Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library.

We started our study with three pages in the J. Tuthill & Son(s) Norwich worsted pattern book (c. 1790–93), accession number 65x695.3 (Figure 1), housed at the Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library (Delaware, USA).

To identify the organic dyes and inorganic mordants, we used a combination of two techniques:

1. destructive high performance liquid chromatography (HPLC) and
2. non-destructive X-ray fluorescence (XRF), respectively.

HPLC analysis involves taking small samples to extract the dyes, subsequently separated into their dye components (chromophores), characteristic to dyes. Following separation, dye components were identified in the same instrument, using a photodiode array detector (PDA), which allowed us to identify components through their characteristic absorption features. Combinations of dye components indicated the presence of a dye or a number of dyes, i.e. alizarin and purpurin may be indicative of madder root.

The XRF allows us to identify numerous elements present in the fabrics which are then related to the mordants, i.e. identification of iron and sulphur was related to iron sulphate, or green vitriol.

Results using this approach (*Table 1*) revealed a limited number of dye combinations and mordants. In close collaboration with Dr Michael Nix, both dyes and suspected mordants were then cross-referenced with import records of dye materials and other historic sources.

It is likely that such clear trends are related to the existence of (house) patents. In the words of a publication on the economics of innovation and technology: “patents do indeed attenuate financing constraints for small firms where information asymmetries may be particularly high and collateral value is low.”<sup>1</sup> The present study can be connected to small Norwich dyeing houses, who would win more buyers by providing products of unique and reproducible high quality. The next steps of this ongoing study include comparing this Norwich textile house with other known houses to further explore this hypothesis.

**Table 1.** Selected experimental results of textile samples taken from pages 1, 27 and 32 of Norwich worsted pattern book (c 1790-93) accession number 65x695.3 Winterthur Museum Garden and Library.

Color	Pattern number*	Page	Dye components*	Possible dyestuff	XRF results**
Red	3	1	ali', car, pur,	Madder, cochineal	Ca, Sn, Zn, Cu, S
	10	1	ali, fka, car, pur	Madder, cochineal	Ca, Sn
	367	27	car, fka	Cochineal	Cu
	445	32	car, dcll	Cochineal	Sn, Ca, Fe, Ti
Yellow	370	27	lut, api	Weld	Fe, K, Ca, As
	372	27	lut, api	Weld	Fe, K, Ca, As
	436	32	lut, api	Weld	Fe≈Cu
	447	32	mor, rut, ukt	Old fustic, tannin source	Ca
Purple	16	1	orc	Orchil	Zn, Ca
	378	27	orc	Orchil	Zn, Ca
	437	32	orc, in	Orchil, indigo plant	Zn, Ca, Fe, Cu
	435	32	orc, mor, in	Orchil, indigo plant, old	Zn, Ca, Fe

\* Dye components identified with HPLC–PDA–MS: in-indigotin; lut-luteolin; api-apigenin; mor-morin; ali-alizarin; pur-purpurin; ppur-pseudopurpurin; fka-flavokermesic acid; car-carminic acid; dcll-unidentified anthraquinoid compound present in coccid dyes; orc-orcein; rut-rutin; ukt-unknown component characteristic to the studied Norwich wools (' indicates the corresponding glucoside)

\*\* all samples showed Fe, Co, K, Ca and As. Major element X-ray lines are listed.

*Table 1* contains representative examples of what has been found so far: Red samples tend to be dyed with either a combination of cochineal and madder, or pure cochineal, and there is extensive use of tin mordants. The majority of Yellow samples contain weld, commonly mordanted with iron salts, although approximately one fourth of the samples show the presence of old fustic. Lastly, all Purple samples analysed revealed the presence of zinc, in association with orchil, with approximately half of these containing an indigo plant as well. The other colours (not shown) that have been analysed displayed similarly clear tendencies (Green, Blue, Brown, Black). As well as cross-referencing scientific and historic information, this study has relevant conservation implications. For instance, flavones (present in weld) and orceins (present in orchil) have been classified as highly fugitive; that is, they rapidly fade when exposed to high illumination levels.

**Dr Jocelyn Alcántara-García**

1. Hottenrott, H.; Hall, B. H.; Czarnitzki, D., Patents as quality signals? The implications for financing constraints on R&D. *Economics of Innovation and New Technology* **2015**, *25* (3), 197-217.

## International Norwich: Mocaffy's swatches 1766–1767

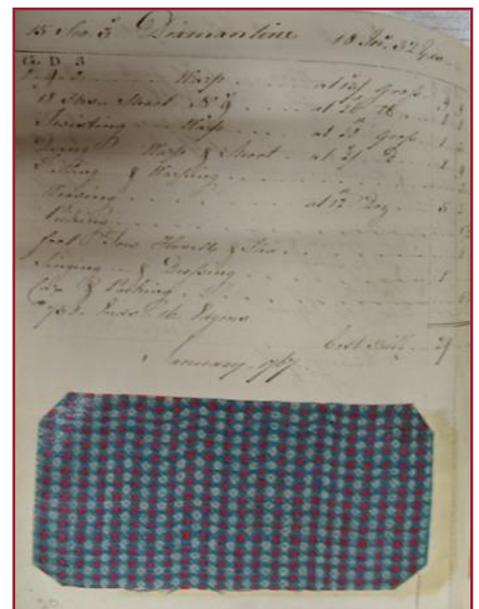
*Dr Michael Nix reports on how he has been using his C&TA Geoffrey Squire Bursary award to make connections between surviving eighteenth-century Norwich Stuffs swatches in Delaware, Paris and London.*

Worsted textiles, known as 'Stuffs', made in vast quantities in Norwich during the eighteenth century, found markets across the world. The buyers of Norwich Stuffs used these colourful fabrics to furnish north American colonial homes, to make folk costume in Scandinavia, ecclesiastical vestments in Spain, Tartar sashes in Russia and to tailor fashionable or everyday wear in Europe, the Americas and China. While looking through *Textiles in America*, a study of textiles in early American homes, by Florence Montgomery, a former Assistant Curator of Textiles at the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, in Delaware, USA, I noticed a plate showing a page from a pattern book, known as the Mocaffy Manuscript, which contains a substantial set of Norwich swatches by an unnamed manufacturer.

One piece caught my attention (Pic 1); I had seen a blue, red and white swatch like this in the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, (Pic 2) in a Costings book from the firm of Stannard & Taylor of St Giles' Broad Street (now St Giles Street), Norwich. I also remembered a letter, written in June 1763, by John Taxtor, a business partner since the beginning of the year, informing John Kelly, the firm's foreign rider or traveller in Spain, that he had lately returned from Germany where he had '*Happened of a new fashioned Stuff, upon which we gott directly orders for 500 pieces*'.



Pic 1. Diamantine from the Mocaffy Manuscript, Bibliothèque Forney, Paris, 1766–1767.



Pic 2. Diamantine from Stannard & Taylor's Costings book, 1767, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.

The firm named the stuff *diamantine*<sup>1</sup>, one of several dress fabrics discussed in this brief article. A Stannard & Taylor sales ledger records the export of this diamond pattern glazed worsted to Italy, Spain, Russia, Norway, Poland, Switzerland, Austria and Germany during the remainder of the decade.<sup>2</sup> After the firm's bankruptcy in 1769, Norwich manufacturers, such as John Christopher Hampp, another St Giles Broad Street company, continued to make diamantine for their overseas correspondents (the term contemporaries used for their customers) but, with other patterns, under the generic heading *floret* or *floretta* (Pic 3).



Pic 3. Diamantines from John Christopher Hampp's pattern book, patterns 1650 and 1651, c.1794, Winterthur Library, Delaware, USA.

The Costings book swatch of *diamantine*, dated January 1767 and the pattern in the Mocaffy Manuscript, dated 1766-1767, appeared to be identical. Dominique Deangeli Cayol, Senior Librarian of wallpaper and printed textiles at the Bibliothèque Forney, the custodian of the manuscript, confirmed the two fabrics matched. Could Stannard & Taylor be the source of the Norwich swatches in the Mocaffy manuscript and indeed, who was Mocaffy?

Fortunately, an invaluable paper written in 2009, by Corine Maitte, professor of history at the University of Paris-East

Marne-la-Vallée, provided some of the answers, once this had been translated from French into English by Ann Nix. Corine referred to a document in the Royal Library of Turin, well known to historians of wool, entitled *Draperies of Piedmont*, which begins with a draft 'narrative of a journey'; significantly, it had never been studied in depth before. Eventually, Maitte identified the author of the narrative as Gian Batta Moccaffy, a Turin merchant, who in 1766

1. Norwich Record Office (NRO), BR211/12, Stannard & Taylor letterbook, letter dated 12 June 1763.  
2. NRO, BR211/7, Stannard & Taylor sales account, 1764-1769.



Pic 4. The first page of Norwich swatches in the Moccafy manuscript showing from the top tapizadoes, brocades, bed damasks and satins (Bibliothèque Forney).

resolved at his own expense, to visit textile manufacturing centres in Normandy, Picardy, Champagne, England, Flanders and Holland, a journey of eleven months.

On his return to Piedmont (Italy), Moccafy produced the narrative containing observations on goods, business practices, methods of manufacture and currencies, which Maitte translated from Italian into French, and the manuscript now in Paris (Pic 4), a compilation of elaborately embellished swatches he had collected during his travels. Comments on the swatches in the narrative emphasize, as Maitte makes clear, the didactic nature of the two books. Read together, they provide a means of explaining to high-ranking non-specialists about eighteenth century textiles and textile production. This may explain the presentation of the manuscript, its appearance designed to impress, to Count Bogin, chief minister of King Charles Emmanuel III of Sardinia, who may have surreptitiously encouraged Moccafy's tour as a means of enabling Piedmontese manufacturers to imitate foreign models of manufacture.<sup>3</sup>

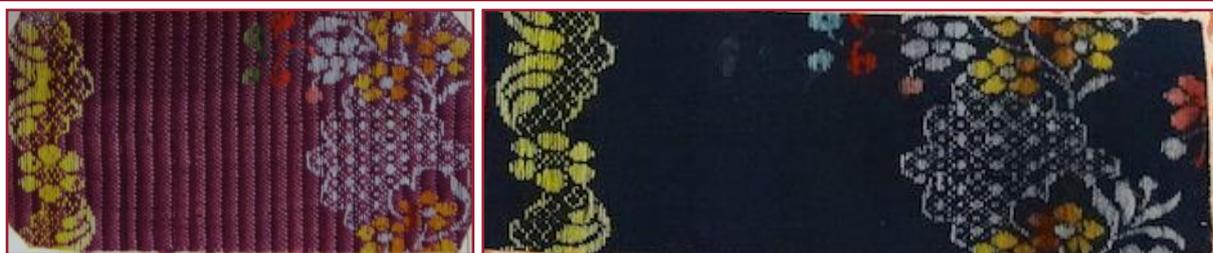
Moccafy reached Norwich after visiting various manufactories in France, London and Leeds, and prior to his final English destination, Exeter. To compare the swatches Moccafy had collected in the city with swatches in the Stannard & Taylor costings book, and to check the translation of Moccafy's comments on them, required viewing the original document in Paris. The Costume and Textile Association's Geoffrey Squire Memorial Bursary award made this feasible. At the Bibliothèque Forney, once the home of the Archbishops of Sens, comparisons and checking took many hours of intensive study; the work alleviated by excellent lunches at the nearby *Les Fous de L'île (Mad People on the Island!)* restaurant.

Whereas the blue, red and white *diamantine* swatches matched in colour and pattern, other identical comparisons could not be made. However, after a great deal of careful cross-referencing, matches in details began to emerge, particularly in the floral designs. For instance,

similarities between *grandines*, may not appear to be immediately obvious because colours differed, but a close study of the flowers revealed the forms to be the same (Pic 5). Further, it transpired that identical patterns, with dissimilar backgrounds, were used to make other types of fabric. In the case of a *russalin* and a *brussels* (Pic 6) both share the same flowers, lace motifs and shaded petals, but their grounds consisted of shaded cording for the former, and plain for the latter. Working through all the swatches in the manuscript, and following a discussion with Ann Nix and Corine Maitte, we concluded that they were by Stannard & Taylor and that Moccafy would have visited their manufactory, on the corner of St Giles' Broad Street and Fisher's Lane, in late 1766 or early 1767, at about the time of the creation of the Costings book.



Pic 5. Comparison of grandine swatches in the V&A costings book (left) and the Moccafy Manuscript, Bibliothèque Forney (right).



Pic 6. Comparison of a russalin swatch in the V&A costings book (left) and a brussels in the Moccafy Manuscript, Bibliothèque Forney (right)

3. 'Au coeur des manufactures lainières européennes du XVIIIe siècle. Le voyage de Gian Batta Moccafy, 1766-1767' – 'Relation de voyage de G.-B. Moccafy', *Documents pour l'histoire des techniques*, n° 18, nouvelle série, 2nd semestre 2009, pp.151–156. Translated by Ann Nix.

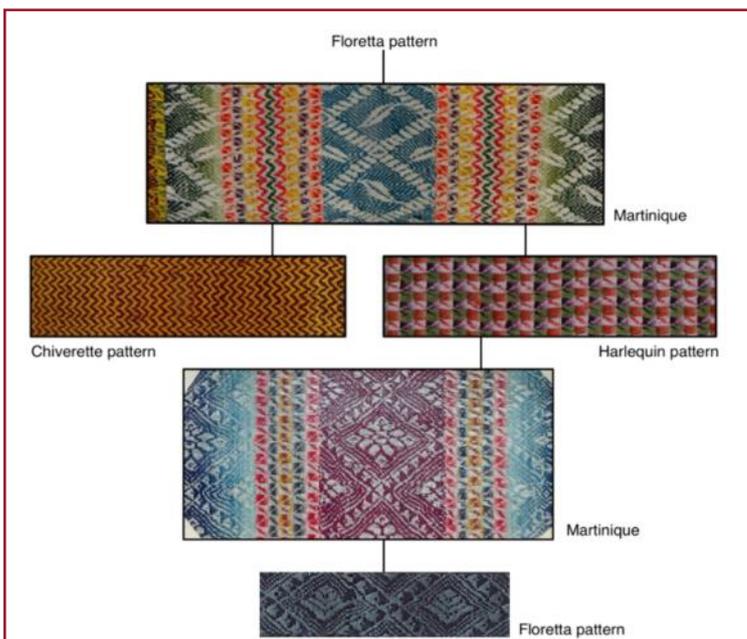
In 1786, the Norwich manufacturer John Harvey, recognised the limitations in the potential range of designs using worsted and worsted mixed with silk. Manchester’s manufacturing of mixtures, such as cotton and silk, he declared, could be ‘wrought up in a thousand different ways’ and printed in ‘the most beautiful, elegant, and permanent figures, without adding to the weight, and very little to the price of the goods’. Having gained a few insights into the fabrics in the two documents, it became increasingly obvious that, to create the more complex patterns, Norwich pattern drawers brought together combinations of elements derived from other fabrics. The *belleisle*, for instance, consists of two: a *floretta* and a *diamantine*. Since we know the *diamantine* dates from 1763 and the Costings book from the beginning of 1767, the origin of the fabric can be dated to 1763–1766, and possibly more precisely to 1765–1766, since Stannard & Taylor’s sales account first records the dispatch of *belleisles* in the May of that year. Export markets comprised Italy, Russia, Germany and Switzerland.<sup>4</sup>

*Martinique*, on the other hand, consists of three distinct elements: the *chiverett*, based on the *chevron*, *harlequin* and *floretta* (Pic 8). When John Kelly travelled to Spain in February 1763, he took with him pattern cards which incorporated five swatches of *martinique*, the name perhaps celebrating the capture of the West Indian island four years earlier. Whoever created the manuscript switched the pair of *chiverett* swatches and two *esterettes*, a star-like pattern similar to *diamantine*, the mistake adding to Maitte’s conviction that Mocaffy had not compiled the document himself. It is also likely that Stannard & Taylor did not make the sample of plain weave camblets placed at the end of the Norwich section of the manuscript. Since Stannard & Taylor principally made striped and floral fabrics it is almost certain, from other evidence, that James Tuthill & Son in St George’s Colegate produced them.



The recognition of a single pattern in two documents - one in Paris, but created in Turin, the other in London, but created in Norwich - led to the identification of a Norwich manufacturer as the source for the collection of floral and striped swatches in the Mocaffy Manuscript and a far better understanding of the stuffs produced by Stannard & Taylor. The study also enabled an in-depth look at Norwich Stuff patterns themselves and how complex designs evolved by combining simpler elements.

Pic 7. Comparison of *belleisle* swatches in the Mocaffy Manuscript, *Bibliothèque Forney* (above) and the V&A *costings* book (below).



Pic 8 Comparison of *martinique* swatches in the Mocaffy Manuscript, *Bibliothèque Forney* (above) V&A *Costings* book (below) with examples *chiverette*, *Mocaffy Manuscript*, *harlequin*, V&A, and *floretta*, *The Winterthur Library*.

**Images courtesy of:**

*Bibliothèque Forney*, Paris, 677.064; *Victoria & Albert Museum*, 68-1885;

*The Winterthur Library*: *Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera*, Col50, 65x695.2 and 65x695.6.

4. NRO, BR211/7, Stannard & Taylor sales account, 1764–1769.

## Geranium Red, Madder Red, Norwich Red: the elusive art of scarlet dyeing

*Textile artist and dyer, Jeannette Durrant, reveals the colourful history of Norwich's most luxurious and desirable dye stuff.*

Red has long been a high-status colour of sacred and secular significance. Its symbolic meaning in Europe is double-edged; the colour red is often used to describe sin, anger or hot headedness, as well as love, desire, ripeness and vitality.

The chief sources of red dye in pre-industrial times were: madder root, *Rubia* from the *Rubiaceae* family of plants; *kermes* insects, *Kermes vermilio*, found in the Kermes oak, *Quercus coccifera*, that grows in the Mediterranean, North Africa and Turkey; or the female cochineal beetles, *Dactylopius coccus*, found on cacti in Central and South America.

The best quality madder came from Holland and Turkey, and madder dye was considered second in importance to indigo. Its natural colour is a brownish red, however, this becomes scarlet when mordanted with tin or copper. In France, the secrets of Turkey Red, a pure scarlet, that was both fast and bright, and made from superior madder, was learnt from Greek workers brought there in 1747.

Scarlet dyeing was an ancient and secretive art, dating from ancient Rome and India; scarlet being a costly, and time consuming colour to produce through natural dyeing methods. Highly-skilled workers used closely-guarded recipes, to make the desirable vibrant colours that were used to produce luxury cloth; inferior cloth was apt to run or fade. The desirable crimson colour was always produced in separate specialist workshops, to avoid contamination with other colours. Madder likes hard water (with a high calcium content), a feature of the local Norwich water.

Historically, wool was the most important fibre used for dyeing in Norwich, as it 'took up' bright and relatively fast dyes. Long-stapled worsted wool was light in weight and the finished fabric draped well. Fabric, or hanks, were often dyed several times to achieve an even, colour-fast result. It could take over ten separate operations - and three to four months - to complete the dyeing process, making red cloth a high-status luxury fabric, afforded by the wealthiest customers. Consequently, scarlet dying became a separate craft.

### Dye Process

Norwich became renowned for its excellence in the production of dyed textiles, and later 'Norwich Red'. Both cloth and yarn was sent to Norwich from all over Britain, to be dyed in the City's dye works.

There were six processes to create the desired results: The wool was cleaned or scoured; then mordanted with alum, copper, or tin to allow dye to penetrate the fibres; dyed; fixed; softened and finally, finished. As dyeing and bleaching requires large quantities of water, so dyers workshops developed close to rivers, such as the River Wensum. Workers operated in an unhealthy atmosphere of wet heat. Furthermore, the processing involved caustic and foul-smelling substances; some ingredients were just alchemy, with no proven advantage, and it was considered an art, not a science. Animalisation – the additions of dead cats, ox blood, dung – as well as bran and chalk, was probably used to alter the acidity of the water and help soften fibres, that may have become harsh, as a result of the chemicals used to scour fabrics and to allow dye to penetrate the 'scales' of wool. Bran makes water alkaline and ferments and helps to fix the dye and was the basis of many recipes; urine or urea, makes water more acidic.



*Silk and wool shawl with Norwich Red ground and wool fillover border. Made by Towler and Campin c. 1844. NMS 542.972.*

### Norwich Red

In addition to wool, Norwich produced half silks, which is a worsted weft (thread drawn through the warp) and silk warp (fixed on the loom), giving a light fabric which draped well and used for high fashion garments and shawls. In the eighteenth century, Norwich scarlet was known as 'Geranium Red'. It was the Scottish-born dyer, Michael Stark, an excellent chemist, who invented a method of dyeing a silk warp, and wool weft, in one dye bath. Colour matching two or more materials is one of the most difficult jobs of the dyer. Stark's brilliant, fast red dye, became known as 'Norwich Red'.

### Decline of Natural Dyeing

Chemical, or synthetic dyes, were first produced in 1856, by British chemist, Sir William Henry Perkin



Gerards Herbal 1597

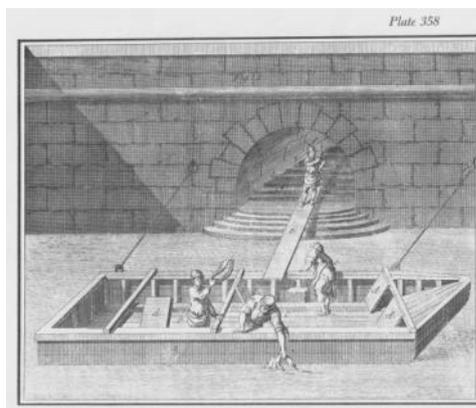


Plictho de Larte 1548

*Madder root dried and powdered to use for dye (far left).*

*Dyeing: Stirring as it boiled and cranking fabric or fibre (left).*

*Rinsing from a barge in the river which polluted the water (right).*

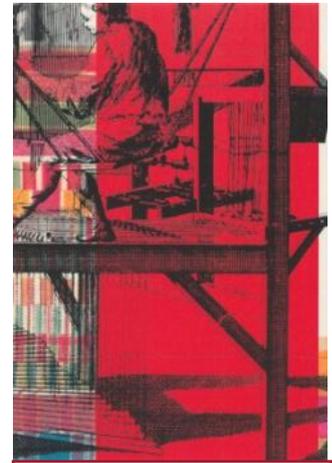


P J Maquer 1759

(1838 – 1907), who discovered the colour mauve or mauveine, from aniline in coal tar. Artificial, alizarin red, sometimes known as Turkey Red, was developed in 1868, by two German chemists, Carl Gräbe (1841 – 1927) and Carl Theodore Liebermann (1842 – 1914). Synthetic dyeing drastically cut costs, and shortens the dye process, making colours universally available, so that scarlet dyeing was no longer difficult, expensive and secretive.

By the end of the eighteenth century, Britain's centres of the textile manufacturing had moved north, from Norwich to the industrial centres of Manchester and Paisley in Scotland. Here, there was cheaper labour and access to wool, coal, and cotton as well as to the coal and the fast-running water that powered the engines. Eventually, by the end of the nineteenth century, Norwich's luxury fabrics and shawls were priced out of the market, and the once dominant production of luxury textiles, was replaced by the manufacture of shoes.

My own experiments to discover the recipe for dyeing scarlet grew out of a study of Norwich Textiles and the excitement of discovering the pattern books of Norwich fabrics which were taken around Europe for fabric orders. Despite working for over four months and varying all the ingredients, I was unable to achieve a good scarlet. The nearest, I achieved was using Turkey madder and a tin mordant. It is possible to do, but would have required many more experiments to succeed completely.



'Norwich Red' Digital Image from Norwich pattern book and drawloom by Jeanette Durrant.

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## H Rumsey Wells: entrepreneur and maker of the 'most expensive caps in the world'

In the nineteen and early twentieth centuries, the wardrobe of stylish gentlemen, ladies, nobles and royalty were incomplete without a bespoke Rumsey Wells cap, hand-crafted in Norwich.

It was a century ago, when a British gentleman, travelling overland from South Africa, arrived in Cairo and booked into a hotel. He had a bath, changed his clothes, put his cap on his head and went for a spot of exploring. Seeing another man on the other side of the street, he walked up to him, clapped him on the back, saying: "I don't know who the blazes you are, sir, but you are wearing a Wells cap, so dammit, come and have a drink." And so the two chaps probably wandered off to have a couple of beers, while putting their Rumsey 'Made in Norwich' Wells caps on the table in front of them.

This little story illustrates how garments, large and small, produced in Norfolk over the centuries have been appreciated across the world. The textile and associated industries have provided work for generations of Norfolk men and women; and many local factories, large and small, have been run by some larger-than-life characters. One such man was Herbert Rumsey Wells (1877 – 1937), cap-maker extraordinaire. The Cairo cap yarn was just one of the tales H. Rumsey Wells told, to spread the word that his headgear was the best in the world.

It was more than 200 years ago when an announcement appeared in the *Norwich Mercury* which declared:

**"GEORGE AND SAMUEL WELLS of 14 COCKEY LANE, [now London Street] beg to**

*acquaint their Friends and the Public that they have this day opened the above situation, where there is now ready for their inspection an elegant and extensive selection of Goods, in all its various branches."*

In 1815, few members of the British population wore cloth caps, apart from gamekeepers, who wore black or blue Melton caps, with neck and ear flaps. Sporting gentlemen wore tall beaver hats for country pursuits of shooting, fishing and hunting. The Wells family had vision, as well as a wonderful way with words; they encouraged everyone to pop on a cap; boys and girls, men and women.



*Rumsey gave his caps local Norfolk names, such as the Blofield, the Brancaster, the Burgh, the Reepham, the Plumstead, and Wroxham.*

*He created the Rumishanter with matching scarf for ladies and the Lad's Sprowston for the boys.*

As their business thrived, the Wells moved to St Andrew's Street, Norwich, which they leased from the brewers, Lacons. Thomas Wells, educated at the Model School in Princes' Street, Norwich, joined the firm making hats and caps for the wholesale and retail trade. By 1879, Thomas became senior partner of T. Wells and Son.

It was Thomas who pioneered the first sporting caps for a range of activities: bicycling, boating, hunting, shooting and even (the then popular sport of) smoking. He also supplied the military services stationed in Norwich. Thomas wrote:

*"The Hussars are excellent judges and their officers are highly satisfied with the articles supplied to them from this establishment,"*

While Thomas had entrepreneurial spirit and an eye for a tale to promote the firm, it was his son, Herbert Rumsey, born in 1877, who became one of the most loved characters, across the country and abroad. H. Rumsey became a partner in the Wells company in 1904.

Herbert Rumsey sought out Norwich's remaining experienced weavers and worked with them to produce finely woven and beautiful silks in traditional patterns. He had uncovered an eighteen century peacock-patterned Norwich design, which he offered in no less than 500 colourings.

Rumsey was particularly proud to announce that his attempt to revive the Norfolk silk industry had received Royal recognition and that his company

*"has been honoured with Royal Commands for His Majesty The King, His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales and other members of the Royal Family."*



H Rumsey Wells, Norwich manufacturer of Rumsey Wells caps.

Rumsey Wells proudly announced that his caps were the best money could buy. Cut from hand-woven material over several hours. Not known his modesty, Rumsey wrote: "Some men wear some sort of a cap made from some sort of cloth, cut in some sort of way – the sort of chap you see in railway carriages (God forbid they should be seen anywhere else). They serve their purpose I suppose, but, if these men knew what awful sights they looked in them, they would have more respect for themselves and consideration for those who have to look at them!" Rumsey proudly announced he made the "most expensive caps in the world". These included the renowned 'Doggie', the Rolls Royce of the cap world – perfect when driving – and individually made to fit a customers' head.

Credit: Archant Library

Bespoke cap measurements were made by using a 'confortmateur' and made up in Wells' Norwich workshop by skilled men and women. Rumsey said measurements could be sent across the world to wherever the cap-wearer ventured. Rumsey declared that his caps were: "Made of the "nicest English, Scotch and Irish tweeds, sewn with English sewing silk and English Polonnaise silk, and made in the capital of the King's County, Norfolk."

H. Rumsey Wells also produced embroidered badges, club, school and regimental colours in ribbons, ties and sashes, clerical felt hats known as birettas, and vestments from Norwich silk.

A familiar figure around the city, Rumsey did a huge amount of work promoting and supporting local charities and cycling organisations.

Norfolk author, Robert Bagshaw, remembered visiting the shop when he was a lad, where there was a rare collection of military headgear - The Norfolk Yeoman Cavalry, The City of Norwich Volunteers, Hay Gurney's Light Horse, The West Norfolk Militia and the 16<sup>th</sup> Lancers - which had been lovingly collected over the years by members of the Wells family. Robert wrote:

*"Rumsey and his shop occupied a unique place in the life of the city of Norwich. I suppose there were some to whom the shop was a little bit posh, but it was also rather special, as was its owner."*

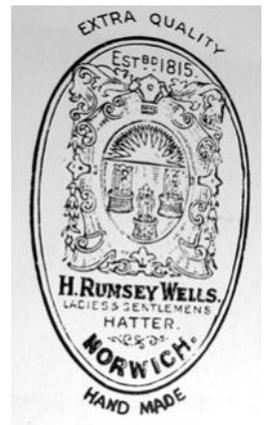
Rumsey died in December 1937, but the business carried on thanks to the dedicated staff and people like Edna Watling and Elsie Bugden. They remembered the men who would visit George Everett in Dove Street to have a plus-four suit made-to-measure for £3 and 10s, then take a sample of cloth to Rumsey Wells for a matching 'Doggie' cap at a guinea or so.

After the Second World War, it became more and more difficult to find skilled craftsmen needed to make Wells caps and clothes. The idea of mass production was dismissed; Rumsey would have hated that.

The shop finally closed in 1974, but the name lives in the Rumsey Wells public house in St Andrew's Street where you can raise a toast to the memory of a remarkable man and Norwich manufacturer.

**Derek James**

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## The Dandiacal Body: Neo-classicism and the birth of modern tailoring

Ian Kelly, actor, presenter and author of *Beau Brummell, The Ultimate Dandy*, invites us into the impeccably dressed world of the eighteenth century's most influential fashionista.

**The 'Great Male Renunciation', when glitter, much colour and all silks and swathing, were renounced in favour of a dress-down neo-classicism**



A Gentleman said to be Beau Brummell. Miniature by William John Thomson, 1807. Photography courtesy Bonhams, London.

Beau Brummell, wit and Regency dandy, is the man widely credited with giving us, in effect, modern trousers, the suit, the collar-and-tie and the somber palette of colours used to this day as a fashion-signaller of sobriety, seriousness or chic. How did a man who never designed anything and whose name has become synonymous with over-dress rather than understatement - a man born the son of a valet, in a Downing Street servants' attic - have such an impact?

George Bryan Brummell (1778-1840) was at the centre of what fashion historians have called the 'Great Male Renunciation', when glitter, much colour and all silks and swathing, were renounced in favour of a dress-down neo-classicism. He was also at the centre of a sort of personality cult in Regency London - lead dandy and arbiter of taste in the so-called 'Dandiacal Body' - a man who rose to notoriety, first as royal favourite to the errant Prince of Wales (later Regent), and whose renown subsided into infamy, once he lost everything. Brummell died in poverty, insane, in France. As a story, it has it all. Nevertheless, he had achieved something extraordinary: he changed the fashion rules.

Although George Brummell was a dandy, he would not have been pleased to be recognised as such, in the sense the word is used today. For Brummell, the aphorism that 'less is more' might have been invented. He once said, 'If John Bull [Everyman] turns around to look at you, you are not well dressed, but either too stiff, too tight, or too fashionable.' And his style - of strict dress-down, monochrome and attention to details of tailoring and laundering - once created, he stuck to. As fashion historian Anne Hollander wrote, 'It is possible to make the case that masculine formal dress of today is directly [Brummell's] responsibility.'



The 'Brummell' look. His palette of colours in daytime was white, buff and blue/black - in imitation of military and revolutionary wear - an early example of 'sportswear' being adopted into the fashion mainstream. Courtesy: Museum of London Collection.

The colours - blue, black, white - the cloths and trouser lines of early-nineteenth-century Hussar regiments, the tailoring skills of a nascent West End shopping economy, British fabrics: wools, worsteds, horse-hair even, for stiffening - and an artistic cult that drew on ancient classical ideals, with distinctly corporeal attractions; the sculpted male bodies of neo-classical statuary - met in Brummell's look and endured.

**'If John Bull turns around to look at you, you are not well dressed, but either too stiff, too tight, or too fashionable.'**

'The criterion of a gentleman's suit is that it should fit well round the shoulders and that the cuff buttons should undo so that he can turn them back when he is washing his hands', wrote Brummell in his unpublished treatise on male fashion. Fair enough then and true enough now. And why is there an inch of shirt cuff showing beyond your jacket? Why to prove, according to Brummell, that your hands were far cleaner than your coat. Or your trousers - another Regency invention created by Brummell and his tailor Jonathan Meyer (the firm trades to this day as Meyer and Mortimer, off Savile Row) - all down to this unlikely hero-in-wool.

Nor is his a legacy just seen in men's fashion and Savile Row. In the twentieth-century, Brummell's style moved on in unexpected ways: across the Channel into women's clothing. A stated disciple of Brummell's aesthetic, Coco Chanel's point that one should notice the wearer and not the clothes, her interest in monochrome and in theretofore sports-wear, all have their antecedents in the style and story of the Beau.

Brummell's house in Mayfair now sports a blue plaque; and on Jermyn Street where he shopped, there is now a statue to this patron saint of sartorial London. How did he do it? Perhaps he was merely the right clothes-horse at the right moment, as the modern city was born. But 'The Suit', arguably Britain's most influential art export, has its origins also in a very British form of celebrity. Long before he was known for his looks, his clothes or his royal connections, Brummell was known around the West End, quite simply, as the wittiest man in London.

Ian Kelly is the author of *Beau Brummell, The Ultimate Dandy*, as well as biographies of *Casanova*, *Vivienne Westwood* and the Georgian comic, Samuel Foote, adapted as the West End comedy, *Mr Foote's Other Leg*.



Image said to be George Bryan Brummell, at a masquerade ball. Monochrome for evening wear became standard for London gentlemen in the wake of Brummell.

## Spangles, Sequins and Satin-stitch: embroidery of the eighteenth century

*Philippa Sims on professional and domestic embroidery of court dress and everyday wear in the Georgian period.*

The production of intricate and delicate embroideries and laces were professions for both men and women during the eighteenth century. In fact, for women, such work was so highly regarded, it was the highest paid trade. As well as professional embroidery workshops, many items were embroidered at home, by women, using family skills handed down, from mother to daughter. It was a popular custom for ladies to ply their needle, or tambour hook (a small crochet hook-like tool), while attending social gatherings.

There was a great diversity of fabrics available to embroider - from gauze, fine silks and muslin. Fashionable, attractive patterns and instructions could be copied from publications such as the popular *Lady's Magazine: or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex, Appropriated Solely for the Use and Amusement*.

Eighteenth century court dress was extravagant and expensive, so was usually undertaken by professional workshops. Costly metal threads were often unpicked from older costumes or uniforms to be re-used on new material; and it was not unknown for such luxurious threads to be unpicked whilst their owner sat in the theatre.

Spangles, sequins in gold, silver or tinted metallic colours were also popular. The *Lady's Magazine* of 1790, describes the dress of the Duchess of Dorset when she attended Queen Charlotte's Birthday at St James's, as: 'a rich white satin mantua, superbly embroidered with spangles, the petticoat as elegantly trimmed, with embroidered crape, blue foil, stone knots, and blue and silver bows in waves. The drapery was handsomely ornamented with spangles.'

Stitches used in silk embroideries were much as we use today - stem, back, satin, long and short, chain, buttonhole couching and knots - practised on samplers. Women of all ages and classes wore aprons and these were often embellished with whitework, quilting or smocking. Tambour work, using a hook and thread, became hugely popular as it could be undertaken during social gatherings and would show off a lady's delicate hand as she worked.



NMS: DSCF0025



NMS: DSCF0026

*Four eighteenth-century embroideries signed by Norfolk lady, Sophia Hase, now in the Norfolk Museum Service Collection (right). Sophia was born at Saxthorpe on 19th May 1757.*

*She married Robert Marsham in 17th April 1781 with whom she had four sons and two daughters, including Robert, Sophia Vertue, Lucy, Edward and Henry. Her husband, Robert became High Sheriff of Norfolk in 1801.*



NMS: DSCF0027

### Further Reading

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- Philippa Sims, *Embroidery Patterns of a Norfolk Lady - Sophia Hase 1757-1824*, Norwich 2018.

*Philippa Sims is the author of the privately published: 'The Embroidery Patterns of a Norfolk Lady: Sophia Hase 1757 - 1824', 2018, available from the City Bookshop, £7.99.*



## Fanny Burney: A Norfolk-born novelist

Dayna Woodbright, Assistant Curator at the Lynn Museum, King's Lynn, reveals the story of Norfolk's forgotten female literary superstar of the eighteenth century and her royal gift.



Fanny Burney (1752-1840)  
Oil on canvas  
By Emil Veresmith active (1891-1924).  
(The painting is based on an earlier portrait of her by her cousin Edward Francesco Burney.)

Today, the English author, Jane Austen, is considered to be one of the great female writers. However, before Jane Austen, there was another phenomenally successful eighteenth-century female author. One that is little known by today - novelist, diarist and playwright, Fanny Burney (1752 - 1840).

Jane Austen grew up reading Fanny's writings, and even mentions her work in *Northanger Abbey* (1803), where she writes: "It is only *Cecilia*, or *Camilla* [by Fanny Burney], or *Belinda* [by Maria Edgeworth]; or, in short, only some work in which the greatest powers of the mind are displayed, in which the most thorough knowledge of human nature, the happiest delineation of its varieties, the liveliest effusions of wit and humour, are conveyed to the world in the best-chosen language."

Fanny was born Frances Burney, on 13th June 1752, in King's Lynn, Norfolk, then known as Lynn Regis. In 1760, her father, the musician and music historian, Dr Charles Burney (1726 - 1814) moved his family to London. Fanny was third of six children.

Around the age of 15, Fanny burned her childhood papers in the garden of her London home as she was anxious that she may become a writer, a career which at the time was considered inappropriate for a woman. Nevertheless despite her misgivings, in 1778, at the age of 26, Fanny published her first novel, *Evelina*, in which the heroine stumbled through the pitfalls of polite Georgian society, before overcoming them and happily marrying. Wary of the public's reaction to her writing, Fanny published the novel anonymously. In it she writes "nothing is so delicate as the reputation of a woman; it is at once the most beautiful and most brittle of all human things."

The novel was a great success and *Cecilia* followed in 1782. It was around this time that Fanny was presented to Queen Charlotte and King George III. In 1786, she was invited to court as second keeper of the robes. Here she remained for five unhappy years. She left this post in 1791, at which point she was presented with a watch and chatelaine, now in the Lynn Museum collection. Made by Wakelin and Taylor, it is fashioned from silver gilt and enamel. On the reverse a circle of split pearls contains the woven hair of the royal princesses. The mauve glass of the fob seal is engraved with a pansy and the words 'A Vous' (To you).

After leaving the royal household, Fanny married the French Catholic émigré, Alexandre D'Arblay, and together they had a son, Alexandre, born 1794. Two years later, came Fanny's third novel *Camilla*, published by subscription. The family moved to France where, in 1810, at the age of 58, Fanny was diagnosed with breast cancer and underwent a mastectomy without aesthetic. Her traumatic experience is detailed in a letter written to her sister headed "Account from Paris of a terrible operation 1812". Fanny survived the ordeal and shortly after her fourth novel *The Wanderer* was released. In 1815, the D'Arblay's returned to England where they settled in Bath. Her husband, Alexandre, died in 1818 and in the years that followed, Fanny worked on her father's memoirs. Fanny, Madam d'Arblay, died in 1840, aged 88.

This intricate and beautiful watch and chatelaine (a set of short chains with useful items) which belonged to Fanny, is displayed at Lynn Museum.

Images courtesy: Norfolk Museum Service

Lynn Museum tells the story of West Norfolk and is home to Seahenge, the unique 4,000 year-old timber circle. The museum is housed in a former Victorian Baptist Chapel on Market Street (by King's Lynn bus station). It is open Tuesday to Saturday 10am – 5pm. Free admission October to March.



## Strangers' Hall in the eighteenth century

Cathy Terry, Senior Curator of Social History, maps the interests and occupations of the many families - mayors, dancing masters and judges - who made the historic Strangers' Hall their home.

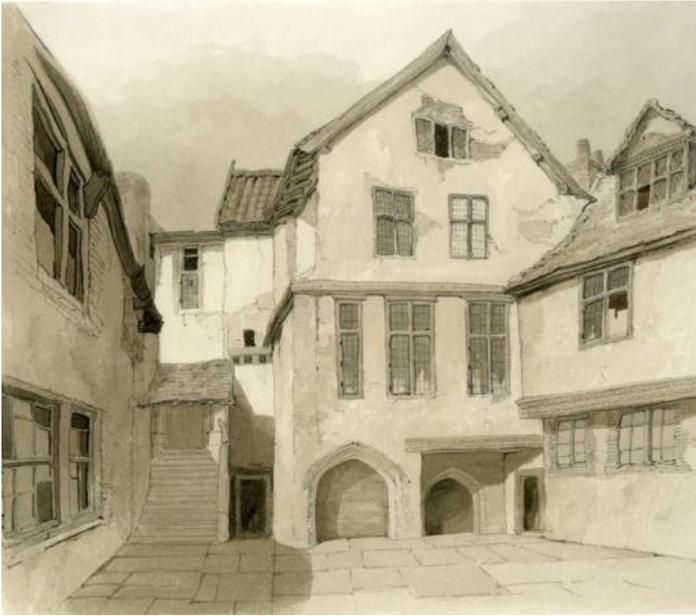


Image courtesy: Norfolk Museum Service

For some four centuries, Strangers' Hall was the residence of choice for many of the City of Norwich's wealthiest citizens: merchants in the grocery and textiles trades, including mayors and aldermen. Each century witnessed enlargements and improvements to the structure, based around the needs of a merchant household, embracing new fashions and civic allegiances. As subsequent owners' wealth increased, so did the complexity of living arrangements; with the addition of parlours, bed-chambers and features like windows and staircases around the central Great Hall. During the eighteenth century, the pace of structural improvements slowed, but inside its various uses, and possibilities, were developed to meet changing times. The property moved from being one of the leading mercantile residences and business hubs, via a dancing master's rooms, to become the Judges' Lodgings and eventually, to a base for the Roman Catholic community in the City.

Writer, Daniel Defoe noted in 1724: *'Norwich is the capital of all the county and the centre of all the trade and manufactures; ancient, large, rich and populous city.'* This dual role as county town and industrial centre is the key to understanding its place in the eighteenth century. The huge area inside the City's medieval walls meant there was scope for internal expansion, by means of the filling up of gardens and developing courtyards of old houses into living quarters and small workshops. This leant particularly well to the growth of Norwich's dominant textiles industry, as it enabled the various textiles trades to find premises; and the numerous weavers found housing suitable for their looms.

At the same time, the public, and more genteel face of the City, expanded with public buildings such as theatres, assembly houses and pleasure gardens, catering for the county's great and good, and for prosperous traders and professional residents alike. Norwich had an ambivalent attitude to change, looking backward to its glory days but, on occasion, pushing forward modernisation. For instance, the Market Cross and Shearing Cross were removed in 1732 to allow for improved street paving.

The old city gates were also demolished, in the name of progress. Some wealthy merchants built new City centre houses, such as Churchman House and the Patterson residence, in Surrey Street. However, there was apparently little enthusiasm for large-scale planned development of classical-styled housing, as was the case in cities like Bath and Bristol. While a number of substantial older properties, such as those in St Giles Street, were given classical facelifts, this didn't happen at Strangers' Hall. When one looks the tall, but irregular, building set in its stone courtyard, behind a modest frontage of shops, it is obvious that the building did not lend itself to modernisation in classical style. Perhaps it was decided to concentrate on the interior. What went on in Strangers' Hall was typical of what happened to other grand old houses in the same period. Rather than being occupied by a single large extended household, as in previous centuries, wings and apartments were gradually rented out as separate units and took on new uses.

The story of Strangers' Hall in the eighteenth century is more complicated than when it was a mercantile residence. A picture can be put together from fragmentary records in numerous sources. Property transfers and deeds, wills and inventories tell us who owned the property, how it changed hands and something about the wealth, tastes and household possessions of the owners. Parish records from St John Maddermarket and St Gregory's reveal the detail of lives lived, including births, marriages and deaths of residents. We can also search for evidence of changes in the fabric of Strangers' Hall itself. And finally we can begin to add information from the early Norwich and Norfolk newspapers and directories.

We know that from 1695, until his death in 1739, John Boseley was the owner of Strangers' Hall. Boseley was a dancing master. Dancing was a fashionable occupation and its popularity was growing in Norwich, aiming as it did to improve deportment and correct carriage and more subtly to oil the wheels of polite society. With the ball and the assembly now venues where people might meet their future partners, being able to turn an elegant minuet on the dance-floor was an essential accomplishment. John Boseley and another dancing master, Francis Christian, were among the subscribers of Feuillet's dancing notation, which helped spread the repertoire of courtly dance from continental Europe to Britain. The number of dancing masters that Norwich was able to support over the century - including four generations of the Noverre family - reflects the 'golden age of dance' as well as the strength of local interest in cultural refinement.

John Boseley was a prosperous individual with property in several parishes. He and his wife, Abigail, started a family at Strangers' Hall. Their first two children, William and Abigail, sadly both dying as infants; their births and deaths being recorded in the parish registers of St John Maddermarket. This was not an uncommon experience at that time. A second Abigail was born, and eventually she moved into Strangers' Hall with her new husband, Thomas Jenney. Previously, the property was leased out to a

Mr Bateman and a Mr Caudron. Abigail and Thomas had several children, including a daughter Abigail, born on 1<sup>st</sup> February 1719. This young lady, with her husband, William Wickes, came to live in Strangers' Hall in 1735 and inherited it on her grandfather, John Boseley's death in 1739.

We know that William Wickes was enrolled as a freeman, by purchase in the trade of Woolcomber. Eight children are recorded as being born to the couple between 1736 and 1753, with a daughter Dorothy, dying in infancy.

John Boseley's will reveals a man of cultured tastes and a lifelong interest in music. It provides a useful gauge of the extent of consumption of newly fashionable luxury goods and furniture. John bequeathed his granddaughter, Mary Jenney: a red-earthen china teapot with a gold chain; six silver spoons, not gilt; a silver sugar bowl and sugar tongs; a strainer spoon; a china boat; a black and gold corner cupboard; eight teaspoons with the crests; a wrought silver cup with a cover; and his late wife's dressing box. His grandson, Thomas Jenney, was left: his fine agate dram bottle case; his Paris gun; his silver watch; his violins (save one which was to be chosen by his executor); his flutes; and £50, plus £10 for mourning. Boseley also stipulated that Thomas should share his books of music and dancing with his executor.

John's granddaughter Abigail, received his houses, lands and tenements in St John Maddermarket and St Gregory parishes. He also left her the sum of £400 plus £10 for mourning; his late wife's picture in a little gold frame; her own mother's picture by Moreland; a large silk easy chair and cushion; two little side chimney glasses; a large new Bible with cuts and a Jericho rose. It is tempting to imagine these new possessions fitting right in, in the parlour at Strangers' Hall. While the property was held in trust for Abigail, William Wickes was regarded as the owner and was clearly alive to the commercial opportunities of Strangers' Hall. In 1748, he obtained a mortgage for the property and apparently used the money to improve what we now call the Georgian Dining Room, but was previously known as the Judges' Room. This involved adding sash windows, a moulded plaster ceiling and classically-proportioned panelling. We guess that Mr Wickes would have been able to charge a good rent for such a highly fashionable and well-appointed suite.

During the eighteenth century, greater awareness of classical architecture among both upper classes, architects and craftsmen, led to the gradual adoption of planned, symmetrical forms. Windows were aligned and enlarged to produce a façade which looked regular, on the outside. Inside, the large rectangular sashes admitted plenty of light and could be dressed with elaborate drapes. The small, often irregular wainscoting of the seventeenth century, was replaced by larger panels of Baltic fir. The timber was skilfully shaped into large regular panels and mouldings added, to provide cornice, dado and skirtings. The proportions of these elements was arranged to represent the classical order, taking its dimensions from Tuscan columns. Paint sampling on the panelling and window shutters during the redecoration in 2015, revealed numerous layers of paint, of which the early ones were variations of the 'stone' colour, made from inexpensive iron oxide pigments – this was one of the cheaper

colours but very popular. Typically, a single colour was used from skirting to ceiling. The painting of the room itself, was always expensive, as painters were highly-valued craftsmen.

For the next few decades, Strangers' Hall was known as the 'Judges' Lodging', accommodating not only the Crown Court Judges, but also their retinues and household servants. Crown Court Judges toured the country in 'circuits' of several counties, visiting each town or city in turn, to try the most serious cases not taken by the Quarter Sessions. When Judges from the Norfolk Circuit arrived for Assize week, the county society flocked to the City for a season of balls, assemblies, theatrical entertainments and gatherings in the local pleasure gardens. We might imagine that the Judges' Room witnessed dining, as well as an amount of high living; not unlike the revelries recorded by Parson Woodforde in the nearby city centre inns. What is beyond doubt is that these Judges presided over trials in which the fate of many men and women was execution or transportation; whether they were charged with murder and highway robbery, house-breaking, sheep stealing and riot. Some historic Judges' Lodgings are still in use to the present day but at Strangers' Hall, their periodic residence ceased before the end of the eighteenth century.

The Judges were only in residence for a brief period in the year, so what else was happening at Strangers' Hall in the later eighteenth century? Newspaper advertisements and announcements from the *Norfolk Chronicle* help provide a picture of multiple uses and occupation. For example, we learn that in 1780, William Wickes was seeking to rent out the main building, described as: '*A large, elegant and most convenient house with garden, cellars, a three stall stable, a pump with exceedingly good water in the back Kitchen. Fit for gentleman's family, a capital Manufacture that requires a deal of room, or a Boarding school which it has been for many years*'. Mrs Lydia Tapper ran the boarding house element and offered rooms for: '*Two or Three Gentlemen intended for the Norwich Schools; opportunity to learn French by hearing it spoken in the family*'. From 1786 onwards, Mr Walker advertised courses of 12 lectures in Natural and Experimental philosophy in a large and commodious room; so for a while Strangers' Hall acted as a centre of enlightened discussion and debate.

Following William Wickes' death, the property was advertised for sale in March 1789, and was '*currently in the occupation of Widow Gosling*', a plumber and glazier. The month after it was offered for letting by R. Roach, plumber. Possibly the same Robert Roach who was admitted to the Freedom of Norwich, on 16<sup>th</sup> March 1776. We don't yet know Roach's connection to Strangers' Hall; perhaps he had married a daughter of William and Abigail Wickes? During the final decade of the eighteenth century, Strangers' Hall was in the ownership of Robert Suffield, a wine merchant of St Giles. This was the start of a long association of Roman Catholic worshippers of the city with the building, at a critical time leading to Catholic emancipation, freedom to worship, and the building of St John's Chapel, now the Maddermarket Theatre. That is a fascinating story in its own right; one that needs to wait for a piece on Strangers' Hall in the nineteenth century.

**Acknowledgement:** Grateful thanks are due to Geoffrey Kelly, former Archivist at Norfolk Record Office and Helen Renton, former Assistant Curator, upon whose researches I have drawn heavily in writing this piece.

## Behind-the-Scenes Tour: Norwich Museums' eighteenth century costume collection

*Senior Curator, Costume & Textiles at Norfolk Museums Service, Ruth Battersby Tooke, guides us on a 'behind-the-scenes' tour of the Norwich Museum Service Costume & Textile Collection.*

The aim of the Norwich Museum Costume and Textile Collection is to understand people's lives through the clothes they wore and the textiles in their homes. In focussing this overview on the eighteenth century, it is possible to reflect on what the collection contains, as well as how it is used - both for display and for the range of requirements of a busy 'stored collection access' programme.

On a typical introductory store tour, visitors are always shown a few of our eighteenth-century objects; usually a peek into a dress bag at a silk sack-back gown, as well as pockets, stomachers, stay busks and shoes. Students of fashion design use such dresses, with the stays and hooped petticoat skirt, to examine construction, and the necessity of the foundation garments in creating the fashionable silhouette. The opportunity to examine the inside of dresses - to see the slits in the skirt for access to tie-on pockets, the way in which the box pleat of a sack-back gown is held to the lining of the bodice, to give the illusion of a free-flowing fall of fabric, while still maintaining a tightly-fitted bodice - is an invaluable experience which viewing through the glass of a museum case cannot replicate.



The eighteenth-century menswear collection is dominated by 51 waistcoats. Together, these provide a comprehensive overview of changes in male fashion from 1720, to the end of the century. It is possible to trace the development of fashionable construction, with sleeved waistcoats which would fall to just above the knee, becoming gradually shorter, until they are just below waist height, by the 1790s. The embellishment of early waistcoats - with large foliate designs of metallic brocading and beading, on silk of deep shades of green and brown - developed over the century into delicate embroidered sprigs of flowers, in silk floss on cream satin. Of particular interest is an unmade waistcoat, which shows the embroidered pocket flaps and waistcoat fronts laid out on a panel of silk satin; these elements were cut out and sewn together to the purchaser's measurements. Even the embroidered motifs that were used to cover buttons, are clustered, ready to be cut out and made up. One example of a complete waistcoat even has spare embroidered motifs, just in case one of the original buttons was lost. The relatively large number of waistcoats in the Collection can be attributed to a number of factors: they are small, so like a baby's cap or first pair of shoes, they are easy to store in a family trunk; the waistcoat is the perfect garment to show off one's taste, as it is separate from a suit of jacket and breeches; the rapidity of fashion changes means there was less damage through wear and also sentimental attachment to a significant occasion may have played a role in determining their survival. One particularly fine waistcoat (*Pic 1*), from around 1770, is a wedding waistcoat. The embroidered pocket flaps feature a representation of the hymenal flame - by referencing the Greek god of marriage, who is represented holding a burning torch - the wearer is also showing off his Classical education.



Further, waistcoats are quite difficult to make into another garment. Difficult, but not impossible, as a pair of breeches made in plain Holland linen and dating from the early nineteenth century demonstrates (*Pic 2*). The button stand and buttonhole sections of the front of a waistcoat from c.1780, have been added to the outer seams, the pocket flaps turned upside-down, serve as cuffs at the knee. These breeches were described as being made by a sailor in the 'dog-watches' (a naval term for 4 pm – 8 pm), by Anne Buck, however it is far more likely that they were theatrical, pageant or fancy dress. They would have made a very effective costume for a principal boy.



The only complete suit in the collection is a gold brocade jacket and breeches, from 1735. A stunning example of the clothing of a wealthy owner, which shows signs of extensive wear and mending. The breeches are lined with chamois leather that would have wicked away moisture and prevented chafing. The jacket has an extremely full skirt, held in undulating folds that are created by a layer of horsehair and unspun wool, and held between the brocade and the silk lining (*Pic 3*).

The womenswear collection is comprehensive, with good examples of fashionable dress from the 1730s onwards. There are 35 dresses, almost all of which are examples of wealthy and fashionable clothing made of silk. These silks display the wealth and taste of their owners - with panels joined selvedge to selvedge; pleated into the waist and draped over hoops to display as much of the textile as possible. They illustrate changes in textile designs and embellishment, with pleated flounces of the dress silk, arranged in serpentine curves across the petticoats and on either side of the open skirt.



One particularly striking dress (*Pic 4*), dating to around 1770, is made of a sulphurous yellow-ribbed silk. This colour became popular as the vogue for Chinese porcelain - which featured this shade - swept through fashionable society. The high quality of the silk is evident in the scalloped edges on the sleeve ruffles, made with chisel-like pinking tools, that have not frayed in over 250 years. This dress was seen in the first rotation of the costume case in the 'Arts of Living' Galleries, in Norwich Castle Museum. Here, costume is selected to illustrate the close ties between fashion and the decorative arts.



Pic 5

One extraordinary donation to Norwich Museums came in 1909, from Charles Edwin Noverre (1845-1920), a justice of the peace (JP) in London. It is a dress, with separate bodice of pale blue and white striped silk (Pic 5), which, according to the Noverre family, was worn by Queen Marie Antoinette of France (1755 – 1793). The letter, accompanying the donation, states that the dress has been in the Noverre family's possession since her execution, and was given: 'by the Queen's wardrobe-keeper to my ancestor the Chevalier Jean Georges Noverre as a memento of the long friendship which had existed between himself and his royal mistress.' Jean Georges was given the post of *Maître de Ballet en Chef*

by Queen Marie Antoinette, in 1775. His brother, Augustin, established his son, Francis, as a dancing master in Norwich, in 1793, citing his training under his uncle, Jean Georges, in an advertisement placed in the *Norwich Mercury*, on August 31<sup>st</sup>. In the 1909 donation letter, Charles Noverre notes that the bodice is 'somewhat disfigured by having had pieces cut from the sleeve as mementoes which were begged of the Chevalier'. As a result, very little of the blue and white striped silk remains on the sleeves, and it is clear the pieces have been cut off in small rectangles. Another fascinating anecdote recorded in the letter, concerns Charles Noverre's grandmother wearing the dress - which has been considerably adjusted - to a fancy dress ball in St Andrew's Hall in Norwich; you can imagine how many times the family story was related that evening.



Pic 6

Accessories, such as aprons, muslin neck squares called *fichus*, tie-on pockets worn underneath hooped dresses, and stomachers - to be worn at the gap between the bodice of an open robe - set the gowns in context, and are also used as examples of needlework techniques and styles. One particularly stunning apron, is made of very fine muslin and tambour, embroidered with figures from the *Commedia dell'Arte*: Harlequin, Punch (Pic 6) and Columbine (Pic 7), cavort between a proscenium arch of drawn-thread work trees. This apron, dated to around 1740, will feature in a forthcoming exhibition, *Circus: Show of Shows*, at Time and Tide Museum, Autumn 2018.



Pic 7

If asked to conjure up an image of eighteenth-century fashions, the crowning feature would be a towering wig. Although there are no wigs surviving, there are three calashes in the Collection. These caned hoods were designed to offer some protection for an elaborate coiffure, while holding the fabric away, to protect the elaborately dressed wig. Powdering was an essential part of the process, and there are two women's powdering gowns in the Collection. One with trailing stems and flowers in tiny chain-stitch, the fabric imported from India; the other a plain, quilted cotton. There is also a man's powder cloth - a long bib with a semi-circular notch at the neck - made of a beautifully printed chintz, the ground, a vermicular pattern with sprigs of flowers, dotted over the surface and around the border. (Pic 8) The print is sharp and crisp, and the colours still shine, indicating the quality of the piece and the desirability of such products. It was made for a member of the Peers family, sometime around 1730-35. Sir Charles Peers (1661-1737) was Chairman of the East India Company and Lord Mayor of London in 1715, and his son Charles worked in Chennai

(Madras), for the East India Company. The Peers family crest - a griffin - can be seen on the centre of the cloth. A shipment of Chinese porcelain - each piece bearing the griffin crest - was commissioned by Sir Charles, and shipped by his son, on the 19<sup>th</sup> November 1731. Chennai, a busy port in south east India, was where imports from China were consolidated with goods of Indian manufacture, most notably printed cotton chintz, and shipped on to Britain. Of the total 250 pieces that made up this particular porcelain service: there is one soup plate in the British Museum; two in the V&A Museum; two in the Metropolitan Museum in New York; and a serving plate in the Royal Scottish Museum, in Edinburgh. The powder cloth was donated by All Hallows School, Ditchingham. It is not clear how the cloth (Pic 8) came to be at the school, but the letter acknowledging the gift also mentions an identical cloth, and one further example, not described in detail. Recent correspondence with the Order of All Hallows, raises the possibility that the cloths were donated by a former student, as girls from wealthy families were educated at the School.



Pic 8

Shoes are perennially popular with visitors, and the eighteenth-century Collection holds 15 pairs and 38 single shoes. Most are upper class women's shoes, made with brocaded silk, or embroidered and spangled. There are five pairs of men's shoes, all leather examples, which may account for their survival. One extraordinary shoe in the collections has a fascinating history. The shoe is absolutely typical of the period (Pic 9), except for its huge size - it measures 37 cms from toe-to-heel and approximately 17 cms at the widest point. It belonged to Charles Byrne, born in County Tyrone in 1761, who exhibited himself in London, as 'O'Brien, the Irish Giant'. Byrne stood at around 7 feet 7 inches tall, and sadly died at the age of only 22 years old, as a result of the growth disorder that gave him his unusual height. Byrne's story becomes even more extraordinary after his death. Knowing that his health was failing, Byrne made arrangements for a burial at sea, to avoid the possibility that his body would fall into the hands of surgeon and anatomist, Dr John Hunter. Nevertheless, Hunter managed to acquire Byrne's body, and his skeleton is displayed in the Hunterian Museum, London. Byrne's shoe was donated to Norwich Museum in 1836, making it one of the very earliest objects to enter the Collection, which began in 1825. There is another shoe belonging to Byrne, in the collection of Northampton Museum; it is very possible that they are a pair - with one each in the collections of the foremost shoe manufacturing regions in England.



Pic 9

## C&TA News

**Geoffrey Squire Memorial Bursary 2019: Call for Applications** Following the success of the inaugural Geoffrey Squire Memorial Bursary awards in 2017, applications will be invited in early 2019 for the second C&TA Bursary. The award of up to £2,000 is made to support research work and study in the fields of textiles and costume, in keeping with the career and life-long interests of Geoffrey Squire (1924 – 2011), a well-known costume and textile historian and theatre designer.

Applicants should be C&TA members and resident in the United Kingdom. For details, terms and conditions and closing date, please visit the C&TA website: [www.ctacostume.org.uk](http://www.ctacostume.org.uk) in early 2019, or see the next issue of C&TA *Noticeboard*, to be published in March 2019. Awards will be made in late June/early July. If you would prefer a paper copy of the Bursary terms and conditions, please write to C&TA Bursary, c/o Costume and Textile Study Centre, Shirehall, Market Avenue, Norwich NR1 3JQ or to Jenny Daniels, C&TA Bursary Co-ordinator, 9 Mile End Road, Norwich NR4 7QY.

If you have a special interest in these fields which you would like to take further and which could be made possible by financial support, please think about making an application. All applications will be considered.

**Resource Collection** Our own C&TA Resource Collection of historic and vintage fashion articles continues to grow, thanks to members and friends who have recently donated items. Parts of the collection have been put to good use this year at several venues, attracting attention to our Association and encouraging new members.

Our annual Costume Detectives workshop draws widely on items in the collection and gives members an opportunity to study garments at close quarters.

As storage is costly and limited, we base our choices on the following criteria:

1. Iconic and/or spectacular when worn or displayed.
2. Illustrating a strand of social, local or family history.
3. Good study potential, in terms of construction and technique.

If you think you have an item which is of interest, either for showing to members or adding to our collection for use in events, please get in touch through our website: [ctacostume.org.uk](http://ctacostume.org.uk) and send an image of the item.

### Isobel Auker, Resource Collection

**Volunteering** Without the loyal support of our regular C&TA volunteers, it would be very difficult to stage public events, like exhibitions and fashion shows. But we do need more volunteers to spread the load a bit. As well as safeguarding our displays, you'll meet interested visitors and I, for one, always learn something new.

If you're wondering if this is something you might like to do, rest assured - it's not hard work, usually very enjoyable - and you don't need to be an expert, just an enthusiast.

At our fashion shows, we rely not only on our lovely C&TA models but those volunteers who are willing to help out backstage in the 'quick-change' department; something that is great fun.

So, next time there is an appeal for volunteers, do please consider giving it a go. No experience is necessary and there's always a committee member on hand for support and guidance, if needed. To quote Dilys Harvey, one of our regular volunteers, 'It's a good experience to be able to get close up to the exhibits and really inspect them when quiet periods happen', Dilys appreciates the opportunity to get involved in the organisation and to meet other C&TA members in this way.

If you need any more information, please don't hesitate to contact me: 01603 452236 or [mandj.daniels@waitrose.com](mailto:mandj.daniels@waitrose.com)

### Jenny Daniels, Volunteer Coordinator

**Membership Secretary** If any member thinks they may be able to offer C&TA some admin assistance, but cannot commit to attending committee meetings, we would love to hear from you. Our membership records are kept on a dedicated laptop that you would keep at home to work on. Membership forms are sent to a PO Box and would then be re-directed by the Post Office, to your home address. Please contact Pauline White if you can help via; [ctacostume@gmail.com](mailto:ctacostume@gmail.com).

### OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE 2017/2018

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